

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ARA-10 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00
PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01
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R 220850Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY LISBON
TO SECSTATE WASHDR 5144
INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN
AMCONSUL CAPETOWN
AMEMBASSY DAKAR
AMEMBASSY GABORONE
AMEMBASSY KINSHASA
AMEMBASSY LAGOS
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
USINT HAVANA
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

C O N F I D E N T I A L LISBON 2109

CAPE TOWN FOR EMBASSY

E.O. 11652: XGDS-3
TAGS: PINR AO PO ZA
SUBJECT: ANGOLA: A MEDIATION ROLE FOR KUANDA?

REF: 77 LISBON 9024

1. DURING A CONVERSATION WITH THE AMBASSADOR ON MARCH 21,
SOARES'S ASSISTANT AND FORMER OVERSEAS MINISTER ANTONIO ALMEIDA E
SANTOS ADVISED THAT THE U.S. CONTINUE ITS "WAIT-AND-SEE ATTITUDE"
TOWARD ANGOLA. ALMEIDA E SANTOS SAID REPORTS REACHING LISBON
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REINFORCED HIS BELIEF THAT AGOSTINHO NETO WAS NOT A GOOD BET. HE
HAD NO TRIBAL SUPPORT AND WAS NOT A BLACK. HE WAS TOTALLY
DEPENDENT ON THE SOVIETS, THE CUBANS, AND FOREIGN EXCHANGE
FROM GULF-CABINDA. JONAS SAVIMBI AND HIS UNITA SUPPORTERS
WERE IN A STRONGER POSITION EACH DAY. ALMEIDA E SANTOS
SAID UNITA REPRESENTATIVES WITH WHOM HE MET PERIODICALLY
IN LISBON WERE CONVINCED THAT IN THE END THE MPLA WOULD HAVE TO COME

TO THE.. ACCORDING TO ALMEIDA E SANTOS, UNITA CONTINUED TO RECEIVE SUPPORT FROM SOUTH AFRICA AND ZAMBIA. ALTHOUGH ZAMBIAN LEADER KENNETH KUANDA PUBLICLY SUPPORTED NETO AND THE MPLA, HE PRIVATELY GAVE AID AND COMFORT TO SAVIMBI AND UNITA. KUANDA COULD NOT AFFORD TO ALIENATE UNITA, WHICH CONTROLLED ROUTES VITAL TO ZAMBIAN TRADE AND COMMERCE. KUANDA AND TO A LESSER EXTENT THE SOVIETS SHARED A COMMON INTEREST IN SOME FORM OF RECONCILIATION BETWEEN THE MPLA AND UNITA. ALMEIDA E SANTOS RECOMMENDED THAT THE UNITED STATES THINK SERIOUSLY OF WORKING THROUGH KUANDA TO ENCOURAGE AN MPLA-UNITA RAPPROCHEMENT.

2. COMMENT: WE NOTE THE SIMILARITIES IN SUBSTANCE AND TONE BETWEEN THE STATEMENTS OF ALMEIDA E SANTOS AND OF UNITA FOREIGN SECRETARY JORGE SANGUMBA LAST NOVEMBER (REFTEL), WHEN SANGUMBA URGED GREATER U.S. INVOLVEMENT IN THE SEARCH FOR A UNITA-MPLA SETTLEMENT. SANGUMBA HAD SUGGESTED WORKING THROUGH VARIOUS AFRICAN PROXIES, OF WHOM KENNETH KUANDA WAS HIS FIRST CHOICE.
BLOOMFIELD

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